

Appln. No. 09/511,955
Amdt dated July 16, 2003
Reply to Office action of April 25, 2003

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A data switch comprising:
[an input port] means for receiving a connection request;
means for identifying a protocol associated with the connection request;
means for dynamically bonding the identified protocol to [the input port] a port, the dynamic bonding allowing the port to transmit packets according to a first protocol during a first communication session and according to a second protocol during a second communication session; and
means for formatting the packet according to the identified protocol.
[means for receiving a data block from a layer three interface; and
means for adding encapsulation information to the data block, the encapsulation information being associated with the identified protocol.]
2. (Currently Amended) The data switch of claim 1 further comprising a cache for storing [the] encapsulation information generated based on the identified protocol.

3-4. (Cancelled)

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5. (Currently Amended) A method for forwarding data blocks comprising:

receiving a connection request;

identifying a protocol associated with the connection request;

dynamically bonding the identified protocol to the input port, the dynamic bonding allowing the port to transmit packets according to a first protocol during a first communication session and according to a second protocol during a second communication session; and

formatting the packet according to the identified protocol.

~~[receiving a data block from a layer three interface; and adding encapsulation information to the data block, the encapsulation information being associated with the identified protocol.]~~

6. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 5 further comprising:

generating encapsulation information based on the identified protocol; and

storing the encapsulation information in a cache.

7-8. (Cancelled)

9. (New) The data switch of claim 1, wherein the protocol is a layer two protocol.

10. (New) The method of claim 5, wherein the protocol is a layer two protocol.

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11. (New) A network switch comprising:
means for establishing a communication session with an end device;
means for identifying a communication protocol associated with the communication session;
means for dynamically configuring a port with the identified communication protocol for a duration of the communication session, the port being capable of being dynamically configured with a different communication protocol upon expiration of the communication session;
means for formatting a data packet based on the identified communication protocol; and
a switching interface coupled to the means for formatting for forwarding the formatted data packet.

12. (New) The network switch of claim 11, wherein the communication protocol is a layer two communication protocol.

13. (New) A method for forwarding data packets comprising:
establishing a communication session with an end device;
identifying a communication protocol associated with the communication session;
dynamically configuring a port with the identified communication protocol for a duration of the communication session, the port being capable of being dynamically configured with a different communication protocol upon expiration of the communication session;

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*Substantive
Amendment*

formatting a data packet based on the identified communication protocol; and

forwarding the formatted data packet via the port.

14 (New) The method of claim 13, wherein the communication protocol is layer two communication protocol.
